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## Spring Newsletter 2010

### Visit by Roseanna Cunningham, Minister for the Environment.

On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010 we were pleased to welcome Roseanna Cunningham to our office in Dervaig Church Hall. After an introduction by Keith Miller of Perth and Argyll Conservancy Ian Hepburn our Project Manager gave an illustrated presentation about NWMCWC. He highlighted the importance of community involvement in our projects. The Forest School has been a particular success and Heather Waller, head teacher at Ulva ferry Primary School, joined Ian to describe some recent activities enjoyed by the children. Ian also discussed the Haul Route and highlighted some concerns surrounding the funding rules. Ms Cunningham clearly understood the point he was making but was unable to guarantee a solution. Adam Dawson of Argyll Islands Native Woodlands Initiative then gave an interesting talk about the importance of forestry to several of the Argyll islands including Mull. We enjoyed an opportunity to discuss matters informally over refreshments before our visitors left to catch the ferry.

### Bonfire Night.

On a crisp clear November evening we lit a huge bonfire by the loch and provided an excellent firework display. Residents of all ages came to join in the fun. Hot soup, mulled wine and other refreshments were served from a trailer by an enthusiastic band of volunteers. Sparklers were handed out to children and adults alike. The fireworks were visible in the night sky for miles giving enjoyment to many more people who had not ventured out. This event was a great success in terms of numbers attending but was disappointing financially as donations were well down on last year. However, at this stage we are hoping to plan a similar event for this year's bonfire night.

### Race Night.

We held a very successful Race Night in Dervaig Village Hall on the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> December. Particular credit must go to Matthew Reade and his team of volunteers who provided a wonderfully entertaining evening with bar and refreshments. We would also like to thank local trades people who sponsored some of the races. These included Dougie at Dervaig Post Office, Nick and Debbie of the Bellachroy, Catriona's Hair and Beauty Salon and Am Birlinn Restaurant. This event raised over £600.00 for the Charity Account.



### Tree O Clock.

NWMCWC took part in the BBC Challenge to plant 100 native deciduous trees in one hour on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December. More than a dozen volunteers had a great deal of fun digging the holes and planting and staking the trees at West Ardhu. We were delighted that some children came along to help and hope they will remember the day when they are adults and see the mature trees.



### Christmas Trees.

Once again we supplied Christmas Trees of all sizes to local people and businesses. Volunteers worked very hard felling and bagging the trees which were distributed from Dervaig Village Hall car park. Altogether we raised more than £700.00 for the Charity Account, which at just £2.00 per foot is quite a lot of Christmas Trees!

### Membership.

Full membership is free and is open to all adult residents in the NW Mull area who are on the Electoral Roll. We also welcome associate and junior members so if you are reading this newsletter and have not already joined you can get more information and download an application form from our website at [www.nwmullwoodland.co.uk](http://www.nwmullwoodland.co.uk).

### Archaeology (by Bill Patterson)

Kildavie settlement (more correctly Cill Da Bhidhe) in Langamull Woodland has proven an excellent site for those of us involved in surveying and recording ruins for Scotland's Rural Past - a division of The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS). Archiving has suggested the name may go back to the Vikings. Surveying has already shown buildings of differing structure suggestive of different periods of building. Reading University Archaeologists came to see the site and suggested we take a strip of turf off the largest structure to see if we can find anything to explain what it is - a burial ground perhaps? The other 11 structures are in keeping with barns and houses. We have just found evidence of the village well or spring. We still need to survey two structures including the large one and the position and elevation of the slope of land down to and including the river as well as digging Professor Mithen's suggested strip mentioned above. We are applying for Adopt-A-Monument status with Archaeology Scotland which would provide support for our work. Anyone interested in helping at Kildavie including any who have not been on surveying courses, please contact Bill Patterson at 01688 400 322 or [bill@mullpattersons.co.uk](mailto:bill@mullpattersons.co.uk)

### **AGM.**

This was held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2010 in Dervaig Village Hall. It was attended by 28 members and 7 associate and non members. Colin Morrison gave a brief review of the past year's events, thanking Directors and members for their hard work and support. He also paid tribute to Michelle Cowe who worked so hard to get the Company up and running and who has now moved on. Ian Hepburn our Development Manager then gave an illustrated report on the progress of a number of projects, including the Haul Route, Forest Crofts and the Forest School. This presentation is now on our website. Our Treasurer John Morrison gave a brief overview of the Annual accounts which are also posted on our website. 2 Directors, Matthew Reade and Tom Addy, stood down. Peter Pinnington who has worked hard over the past few months as a co opted Director was elected onto the Board as were Catriona Duncan and Alec Duncan. After the meeting refreshments were served and members had the opportunity to talk to the Directors informally.

### **Fundraising.**

As you can see from the reports of our fundraising activities in this Newsletter, we are willing to try a very wide range of activities to suit all ages and tastes. If you have a fundraising idea that is fun and community based we would be very happy to discuss it with you. Please contact Belinda or Ian on 01688 400600 or speak to any of our Directors.

### **Woodmizer.**

We are joint owners of a fully portable sawmill which can turn tree trunks into planks wherever the trees are. It is available for hire complete with operator. For more information contact the Office, 01688 400600.

### **100 Club.**

The first draw was made by Dr. Bill Patterson at the Dervaig Village Hall AGM. The lucky winners were: 1st Prize (£35.00) Ailsa Morgan, 2nd Prize (£15.00) Mary Barton, 3rd Prize (£5.00) Barry Prater, 4th Prize (£3.50) Emma Gardiner. There will be three more draws before November 2010, the next will be 21st May. We still have less than 100 numbers allocated so, although it is too late to sign up for this year's draws we are accepting applications for next year. See our website for details.

### **More Archaeology.**

As well as the surveying of Kildavie described by Bill Patterson overleaf, work is also ongoing to clear the dun at West Ardhu. We hope to participate in Archaeology Scotland's 'Adopt a Monument' Scheme, and form partnerships with various historical bodies, so that we can eventually have marked paths and information boards for both these sites.

### **Bird Hide.**

Plans are moving forward for a bird watching hide near the shore of Loch Cuin. We hope to be able to give you more information in the next Newsletter.

### **Haul Route.**

Work is scheduled to start on our Haul Route the week commencing 29th March. Ian Hepburn has worked very hard and surmounted innumerable obstacles to bring this about and deserves our thanks. 'Why is the Haul Route so important?' you may ask. Part of our remit is to manage the woodlands properly and this includes harvesting the mature timber (or it will just fall down). The new road will bear the weight of the lorries which will take the timber off island. The money we raise from selling this timber will mean we are no longer dependent on Lottery and other outside funding to keep going. It will also enable us to start replanting the forest in line with the Forest Design Plan. The improved access will allow us to move forward with other projects including signposted walks, cycle paths, a multi use building, forest crofts, green burial ground and much more. Initial work on the road will be spread over several sites which will all link up when completed.

### **Community Information Sessions.**

On Saturday 17th April we would like to invite all local residents to an informal opportunity to see what NWMCWC has been doing lately and what we hope for the future. There will be two sessions in Dervaig Village Hall, 3.00pm—5.00pm and 7.00pm—9.00pm. There will be display boards, PowerPoint presentations and most important the chance to discuss your views with Directors and guest experts. Tea and cakes will be served at the afternoon session and wine and nibbles in the evening. We look forward to welcoming you. This is your Community Company and we need your opinions so we can do our very best to develop it in the ways you want.

### **Mull and Iona Wildlife Week.**

This island wide celebration of nature starts on Saturday 8th May and NWMCWC is hoping to offer some activities to encourage you into our beautiful woodlands. As yet we have no details but watch out for information posters nearer the time.

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